

Delta State University
Faculty Senate
Thursday, May 12, 2011
3:30 p.m., Union 302A

Voting Members present:

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|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Gokhan R. Karahan | Patricia Brown | Ellen S. Green |
| Nina Baghai-Riding | Brett Oleis | Tricia Walker |
| Subramanian Swaminathan | Debarashmi Mitra | Daniel Glenn |
| Allan Mitchell | Clint Tibbs | Stephen A. Patton |
| David Hebert | Douglas L. Mark | |

I. Agenda (05-12-11) approved and **Minutes** (04-14-11) approved.

II. President's Report:

President Hilpert asked Provost Lotven to look into Tenure and Promotion.

The Admissions Office began using Cappex in May 2010. Later in the year we implemented three additional campaigns: Aviation, Education, and the Delta Music Institute. Cappex is an online college search tool for high school juniors and seniors, they complete a student profile which includes their intended major, leadership, volunteer and extra-curricular activities, school size and tuition preferences, etc. Based on their profile, high school students are matched to colleges. We are then able to target students that are interested in Delta State and meet our admission criteria.

III. Report from Staff Council: No Report

IV. Graduate Council: No Report

V. Report from BPAC: No Report

VI. Report from Budget Committee: Waiting for last draft.

VII. Committee on Elections: We need to fill proxy vacancies and make rosters for next fall.

VIII. Committee on University Standing Committees: Sent out standing committees in September.

IX. Committee on Technology: No Report

X. Committee on University Services: No Report

XI. Committee on General Academic Affairs: Looking into Tenure and Promotion.

XII. Provost Question Time:

- Is the IHL Board of Trustees mandating that we somehow reduce or revamp our General Education requirements?

The only IHL Board or staff mandate is the 30 semester hour general education core.

- If the IHL is not mandating a change, then why is there a sudden interest in cutting Gen. Ed. requirements? Is this coming from the Office of Academic Affairs, or it coming solely from the Gen. Ed. Committee?

There is no “sudden interest in cutting Gen Ed requirements.” As it should be there is always ongoing discussion regarding the General Education requirements by faculty on this campus, the General Education Committee, the IHL board and staff, and SACS. Unlike other curricular matters that are primarily the responsibility of a given program, department, or division, the general education curriculum is the responsibility of all DSU faculty. So, in the same manner that the curriculum of any given major, minor, concentration, etc. is continuously reviewed and evaluated by the respective faculty and committees who are responsible for it, the general education curriculum committee is responsible for the review of general education curriculum.

I am pleased to see that the DSU system works as it does, and that the General Education Committee, a faculty committee, is actively seeking input from faculty across the university on the Gen Ed curriculum.

- What was the exact charge given to the Gen Ed committee to look into requirement changes?

The committee’s continuous charge, its primary function, is the ongoing review of general education purposes, requirements, courses, and outcomes. The evidence of their review is an essential element of accreditation.

- The last time Gen Ed requirements were revisited, it took 3 years of thorough investigation and collaboration. Is there a rush to do so this time and if so, why?

I am not aware that there is a rush. The committee has stated that it is in the very early stages of a review process. The request for input will be used to inform their next steps when they reconvene in the fall.

- May we have your assurance that Academic Council will not act on any Gen Ed changes during the summer.

The Gen Ed committee is a faculty committee that meets at times best for faculty. The General Education Committee will not be meeting through the summer and Academic Council does not currently have a recommendation from the committee.

- A couple of months ago we heard that the university was preparing to review its standards for online classes. Is this currently under way? Who is in charge? And what sorts of issues or inconsistencies do we expect to remedy?

Although questions are raised from time to time about the need for separate standards for online courses, there is not a campus-wide effort to establish standards. Acting on the course and program evaluations that currently take place across the campus and issues that are identified by faculty, improvement activities are variously initiated at the department/division level and the college/school level, led by faculty, program coordinators, chairs and deans.

SACS requires that all institutions will ensure that the quality of the distance education experience is equal to that of the traditional. As is evident in our Distance Education Policy, DSU is intentional about ensuring that the distance education opportunities meet the SACS requirements. In the section “Academic Standards for Distance Education” the policy states, “Distance education courses will meet all academic requirements and quality standards of Delta State University and of all accrediting bodies.”

XIII. Open Discussion:

Can we wait until June?

- **Allan Mitchell**

Until we know what the General Education Committee's process is, we don't have enough information.

- **Daniel Glenn**

It would be nice to get an idea of what is going on in the General Education Committee. This is a crisis of faith.

- **Mark Bonta**

The General Education Curriculum that is now in place was established after an intensive three-year study that involved wide research, several surveys, many discussions (with the entire faculty) and multiple drafts. What we have in place now was brought about by much compromise—a consensus document that won the approval of the entire faculty by a vote of 127-5.

Based on this history, in the fall 2008 the General Education Committee wisely agreed by unanimous vote that “the general education structure will not be changed to give an advantage to any one department/division at the expense of another.” Some of these new proposals contradict guiding principles adopted by the Gen. Ed. committee. What we have in place is a very delicate balance, and no changes should be made without much thought, discussion, research, input and a selfless rational. Of greatest importance, the process must include complete transparency. Why would some of these proposals go out without input from the units most affected by them?

- **William Hays**

We could end up adding courses. It isn't a given that courses will be cut.

- **Provost Ann Lotven**

Why are we giving raises if there is uncertainty?

- **Gokhan Karahan**

There is real concern about Faculty and Staff not being able to handle the increases in the cost of living.

- **Provost Ann Lotven**

What will be our strategy if the legislature implements some form of performance based measures? Many of our students work part time jobs and some don't come in with AP credit. It may take them longer to graduate than students with more advantages. If appropriations are somehow linked to graduation rate could this be a problem? Could reducing Gen Ed requirements help if we move toward performance based measures?

- **Stephen A. Patton**

Should the new funding formula be implemented we would consider many issues.

- **Provost Ann Lotven**

XIV. New Business: The General Education Committee (chair only?) will come and discuss the three ideas put to the faculty on the 6th of May 2011.

I don't believe there was a quorum at the last General Education Committee meeting.
- Patricia Brown

XV. Adjournment:

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Patton, Secretary
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